The health, safety and well-being of students and staff is a top priority as schools are reopened.

The word 'synchronous' means working together at the same time, and synchronous learning is a key component to the success and well-being of our students. When synchronous learning cannot be engaged in through physically being in the same room, technology provides us with some great opportunities.

Technology provides an opportunity for educators to be able to connect with students and nurture established relationships. The social-emotional needs of our students are important to their overall success, and synchronous learning continues with connections that support our students' well-being.

Powerful pedagogy transcends learning environments. Whether learning is facilitated in a physical room or a virtual room, educators work to support the implementation of global competencies - collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, self-regulation, communication and digital citizenship, for 21st century learning. Synchronous learning provides educators and students with the ability to interact and connect in real-time and promotes rich interactions for learning. Educators can provide immediate feedback to the learning that students demonstrate while nurturing teacher-student relationships. Synchronous learning in virtual environments provides both the educator and the students with a classroom-like learning space while providing the important social element that helps support learning, relationships and the social and emotional needs of our learners.

The following document outlines some of the best practices to be considered when engaging in synchronous learning in virtual environments within Superior-Greenstone District School Board. Synchronous learning is required for remote learning. For more information, see *Requirements for Remote Learning fact* sheet.

Technology:
- ✓ Use the platform tools approved by Superior-Greenstone District School Board.
- ✓ Record and share learning sessions to ensure equity of learning for all students.
- ✓ Access all SGDSB approved tools using SGDSB credentials.
- ✓ Embed the learning of the technology with your students to ensure that the focus shifts to the learning and not the tool.
- ✓ Abide by the Board's acceptable use of technology document, don't share passwords or leave your device logged in and unattended.
- ✓ Ensure all system updates are done regularly.
- ✓ Educators should contact the IT department with any questions or concerns and use the ticket submission form in eBase.
- ✓ Parents/Guardians and students should inform their teacher or principal immediately if any IT issues arise on a SGDSB issued device.
- ✓ Educators need to be prepared to upload resources to a chosen learning and teaching platform and deliver synchronous learning opportunities throughout their day/class.
- ✓ SGDSB will assess whether there are students who need access to a device or internet and take steps to distribute school resources to ensure students can stay connected, wherever possible, to learning.
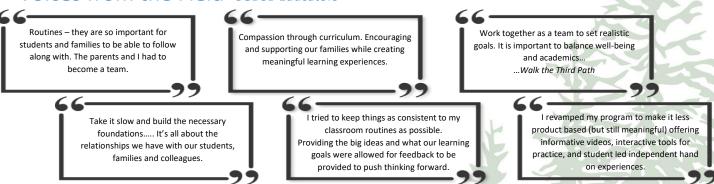
Communication:
- ✓ Maintain professional language and interactions in the online space at all times.
- ✓ Educators should maintain a consistent synchronous learning schedule to support learners and their families in organizing their day.
- ✓ Educators will clearly communicate in Edsby the hours they will be available for direct support.
- ✓ Be mindful of the time messages are sent. Be aware that not all families can respond quickly or that educators may not be available to respond beyond regular, instructional hours.
- ✓ Classes should co-create online learning norms for the virtual classroom so that expectations are understood by all.
- ✓ Chat tools will be monitored to ensure students are on-task and engaging in positive digital citizenship.
- ✓ Be aware of your background in video calls, use obscuring tools when necessary and available.
- ✓ Keep sensitive information away from others in a safe secure place.
- ✓ Organize structured opportunities for small-group instruction for enhanced feedback and observation of learning.

Safety:
- ✓ Ensure that only SGDSB tools are utilized for communication, learning and assessing student work.
- ✓ Students should be encouraged to join synchronous learning in a shared, open space within their home/learning location.
- ✓ Concerns regarding student behaviour will be documented as they normally would and parents/guardians will be made aware of any ongoing issues.
- ✓ Student information will not be provided to technology sites that are not board approved without first reaching out to IT.
- ✓ As with all opportunities to meet with students on a one on one basis to support student achievement and well-being, the professional standards that govern our interaction with students in the traditional classroom will be maintained.
- ✓ Work with teachers and other support staff to have multiple staff in one virtual classroom, where possible.
- ✓ Should remote delivery be required, wherever possible, schools will remain open as workplaces for teachers, to support the delivery of high-quality synchronous learning.

Voices from the Field -SGDSB Educators

"
Routines – they are so important for students and families to be able to follow along with. The parents and I had to become a team.
"

"
Compassion through curriculum. Encouraging and supporting our families while creating meaningful learning experiences.
"

"
Work together as a team to set realistic goals. It is important to balance well-being and academics…
…*Walk the Third Path*
"

"
Take it slow and build the necessary foundations….. It's all about the relationships we have with our students, families and colleagues.
"

"
I tried to keep things as consistent to my classroom routines as possible. Providing the big ideas and what our learning goals were allowed for feedback to be provided to push thinking forward.
"

"
I revamped my program to make it less product based (but still meaningful) offering informative videos, interactive tools for practice, and student led independent hand on experiences.
"

For any questions, concerns, or accommodations, please contact your child's school principal.

Small Schools Make a Difference